

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 AID-20 M-03

A-01 OPR-02 SY-07 PC-15 OC-06 SIL-01 LAB-06 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 RSR-01 IO-12 /168 W

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R 232200 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1420

INFO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

USCINCSO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 2043

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, AR

SUBJECT: NATIONWIDE POLICE STRIKES

REF: BA-1986

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. BUENOS AIRES PROVINCIAL POLICE REMAIN UNDER MILITARY SUPERVISION FOLLOWING ARMY EVICTION OF STRIKING POLICE PERSONNEL FROM LA PLATA HEADQUARTERS REPORTED REFTEL. CALM REIGNS IN REST OF PROVINCE. ROSARIO, MENDOZA, AND CORDOBA POLICE HAVE REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED GOVERNMENT WAGE HIKE OFFERS, WHILE TUCUMAN AND NEUQUEN PERSONNEL CONTINUING TO NEGOTIATE. INTERIOR MINISTER MOR ROIG WENT ON NATIONAL RADIO- TV LAST NIGHT TO REAFFIRM INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COUNTRY TO BE CARRIED OUT. END SUMMARY.

2. BUENOS AIRES PROVINCIAL POLICE REMAIN UNDER MILITARY SUPERVISION; HOWEVER, PERSONNEL REPORTED BACK ON JOB UNDER GENERAL MOBILIZATION ORDER ISSUED MARCH 21 BY DEFENSE MINISTRY. OFFICIAL CASUALTY COUNT OF MARCH 21 ARMY OPERATION AGAINST POLICE OCCUPYING LA PLATA HEADQUARTERS (REPORTED REFTEL) STANDS AT THREE DEAD AND FOUR
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WOUNDED. UNOFFICIAL TOLLS OF WOUNDED RUN AS HIGH AS 50. CALM REIGNS IN REST OF PROVINCE.

3. ROSARIO POLICE LEFT HEADQUARTERS BUILDING PEACEFULLY EARLY MORNING MARCH 22 AND REPORTEDLY HAVE ACCEPTED PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PAY HIKE. MENDOZA POLICE, ALSO ACTING UNDER MOBILIZATION DECREE, ALSO HAVE SETTLED WITH AUTHORITIES AS HAVE CORDOBA POLICE. TUCUMAN AND NEUQUEN POLICE PERSONNEL STUDYING WAGE OFFERS.

4. ANOTHER APPARENT "CASUALTY" OF UNREST WAS MENDOZA GOVERNOR DR FELIX GIBBS WHO SENT RESIGNATION TO INTERIOR MINISTER MOR ROIG MARCH 22. GIBBS CITED POLICE WAGE DISPUTE AS ONLY ONE OF SERIES OF PROBLEMS DURING HIS YEAR LONG TENURE.

5. MOR ROIG IN TELEVISED SPEECH EVENING MARCH 22, CALLED LA PLATA EPISODE "ABSURD AND LAMENTABLE" AND SAID THAT RESPONSIBILITY LIES NOT IN POLICE RANK AND FILE BUT RATHER IN HIGHER ECHELONS AS WELL AS IN CERTAIN FACTORS WHICH ENCOURAGE REBELLION (E. G. LOW PAY). NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, HE ADDED, HAD NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE BUT TO REESTABLISH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE. MOR ROIG REAFFIRMED INTENT OF GOA TO CARRY THROUGH WITH INSTITUTIONALIZATION PROCESS, AND THAT AUTHORITIES WILL NOT BE SWAYED BY EXIGENCIES OF TIME TO GRANT UNWARRANTED CONCESSIONS.

6. COMMENT. MOR ROIG'S ATTEMPT TO FIX BLAME ON HIGHER UPS AND OTHER FACTORS WAS A PROBABLE MOVE TO COOL TEMPERS AND REDUCE FRICTION BETWEEN POLICE AND MILITARY ELEMENTS FOLLOWING LA PLATA OPERATION AS WELL AS TO REASSURE NERVOUS SECTORS OF POPULACE THAT ELECTED GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE POWER.

7. DAO SOURCES REPORT GROWING FEELING IN ARMY THAT LANUSSE AND PERHAPS OTHER HARD LINERS LESS THAN SINCERE WHEN THEY PROMISE TO TURN OVER GOVERNMENT TO PERONISTS. THEY CITE UNWILLINGNESS OF LANUSSE TO GRANT WAGE INCREASE TO PROVINCIAL POLICE WHEN GIVEN OPPORTUNITY BEFORE CURRENT DISTURBANCES ERUPTED AS EXAMPLE OF MOVE TO GENERATE SUFFICIENT GENERAL UNREST TO WARRANT CONTINUED MILITARY RULE.
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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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